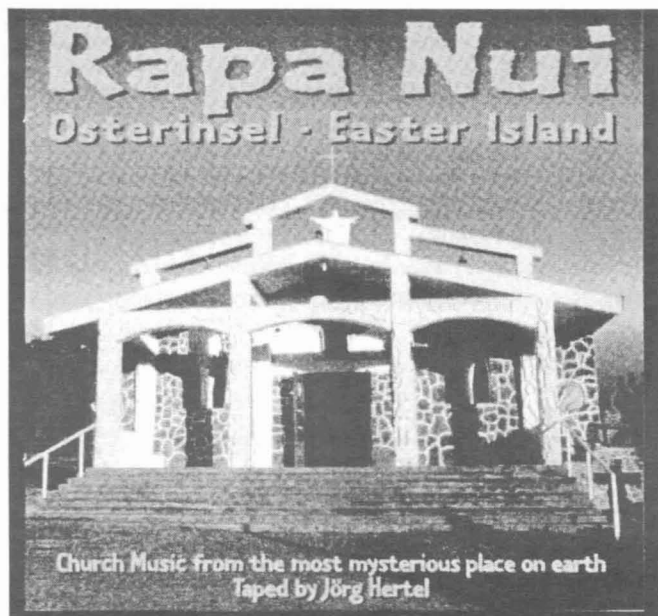


I purchased mine over the counter at the Museum itself. I did not see it in any other shop on the island. The Museum shop does not sell it either; just at the entrance. I tried the Chilean Government DiBAM (Departamento de Bibliotecas, Archivos and Museos) website in the hopes that they might sell it, but no luck. Francisco Torres, the temporary director of MAPSE (Museo Antropológico Padre Sebastián Englert), told me that if people send an e-mail (mapse@entelchile.net) or otherwise contact him, he would try to find a way to sell and post the CD. Or, purchase it on your next visit to the Island! I am told that from the USA, the cheapest route at the moment actually is through Pape'ete, so stop there and pick up the other two French discs as well and you will have the full set.



**Rapa Nui/Easter Island/Osterinsel Church Music from the Most Mysterious Place on Earth**

Taped by Jörg Hertel, Tug Records  
Schiffstr.10, 91054 Erlangen, Germany  
kontakt@joerghertel.de www.joerghertel.de  
Neun@sci.com (\$15, plus \$10 shipping/handling overseas).

JÖRG HERTEL HAS CREATED A NEW CD of Rapanui music. His former CD, "Rapa Nui, Music and Natural Sounds" is now joined by "Rapa Nui, Church Music from the Most Mysterious Place on Earth."

Jörg has this to say about his experiences with the music of Easter Island: I am from Leipzig, East Germany. Perhaps my interest in the music of Easter Island is that I also come from a once-isolated place. Despite, or because of, the remoteness, I was attracted to Easter Island's "isolation music". There, humans sing one to another, perhaps to escape from these feelings of isolation. I noticed this when I began working as a music therapist and began listening to the music of Easter Island along with my patients. Most of them felt comfort from the rhythmic sounds, as in "Abraham's lap" they used to say. Often they said it was happy and melancholy at the same time. But the contradiction exists. On the one hand the islanders say, "singing holds

body and soul together". But on the other hand they are in hard competition with each other and wish to produce their own CDs, not just be a part of a larger selection. They argue vigorously and yet can be reserved and gentle. Their music mirrors this. Often they laugh and cry at the same time. It depends upon the momentary emotional presence of the listener as to whether or not it assumes more melancholy. How long can we share this variety, this shameless restraint? Papa Kiko is old, and he is the preserver of the music from the island. I hope the music can be passed along, but I could not find a successor. I preserved some music on CDs, which is probably the poorest version of retaining. But there is hard competition amongst the musicians and now there are organized bands with sponsors. Previously they sang in spontaneous gatherings.

Not only is the quantitative musical variety in danger but it is also jeopardized by the opening up the island to the world. The music of Easter Island diminishes aggression and makes work easier, it lets us sleep well, or gives us pure pleasure everywhere it is heard. I hope that the music of this isolated island—after the tribal wars, the missionaries, the researchers from the West—can also survive the flood of tourists and remain the most sensitive and long-lived link between past and present human society.

**Art of the Pacific Islands CD**

Produced by Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL); Art Selection and Content: Caroline Yacoe; Line and Content Editor: Wendy Arbeit

A Content Review by Norman Hurst

AT FIRST GLANCE, THE CD *Art of the Pacific Islands* is promising. It advertises over 100 images of Pacific Islands' art objects. These are organized into Micronesian, Melanesian and Polynesian culture areas, with specific island groups listed under their appropriate classifications. The program includes background audio and some video clips. There is also a glossary, bibliography and a list of photographic credits.

This reviewer is not recommending this product however, for several reasons, the most important of which is that the texts are not well written and most of the objects pictured were not made for use in their respective cultures. The CD purports to be of educational value. However, the example set by the text is negative with respect to content and viewers are given a trivialized selection of art from the cultures represented, most of which consist of tourist trinkets and reproductions.

These failings are not those of a writer or producer without resources. The bibliography cites excellent general works by such experts as D'Allewa, Gathercole, Guiart, Kaeppler, Meyers, Newton, Thomas, Neich, and Waite. All these authors have produced informative works, well written and well illustrated. The CD *Art of the Pacific* falls short of this standard.

The author of the text has created entries replete with grammatical mistakes including sentence fragments, failures of subject-verb agreement, and contractions. Greater failings are the poor syntax, generalizing tone, and non-sequiturs that characterize some entries. This is admittedly a subjective evaluation, but one that should be apparent from the following excerpts:

Part of a text about a Māori sculpture reads:

And the highly carved very busy spiral patterns on the face and body continues the intensity of the facial expression. ...and later in the same entry: Only special people were allowed to carve because they needed to know the "design rules" so as not to offend the gods.

Another entry in the Micronesian section reads:

Since the ocean has been so important in Micronesian life, canoe making and adornment has become an art form. Reflecting a renewed interest in sailing, one took part in the 1996 Pacific Arts Festival in Samoa.

The accompanying photograph titled, *Marshallse outrigger canoe, 1940* (credit B 36a) shows neither art nor ornament and does not relate to the *renewed interest in sailing* as it was made at least 56 years before the 1996 Pacific Arts Festival mentioned in the text.

One might forgive problems in the text if it contained fundamentally correct information. However there are many instances of incorrect attribution, inaccurate captioning and, more importantly, false statements of fact, nomenclature, or cultural usage. One example evidencing the writer's lack of attention comes from text 17 in the Polynesian section. Paired with the image of a man dancing, the text reads: "*An artist on board the French sailing ship Du petit Thouars drew this picture of a Marquesan man.*" The writer has conflated the voyager (contr-admiral Dupetit-Thouars) with his vessel (*la Reine Blanche*), which is like mixing up Christopher Columbus and the *Santa Maria*.

Image 12 in the Melanesian section is accompanied by text reading: "*The old man in front of this house is a leader who has spent his life learning all the rituals and secrets of the ceremonies.*" The illustration shows only a modern *malangan* façade with no one in the photograph. A Santa Cruz composite ornament is mistakenly termed a *kap kap*, rather than the correct name *tiema* or *tema* (meaning moon) as Deborah Waite's *Art of the Solomon Islands*, which is cited in the bibliography should have informed the writer.

Polynesian entry 16 shows two pairs of carved women's ear ornaments (*pu taiana*). The text reads: "*Ear ornaments were once carved from human bone, usually that of an ancestor or victim. Men wore different images than women did.*" Ornaments such as those shown are nearly always carved of marine ivory or shell. Men's ear ornaments (*hakakai*) in fact do have similar images, it is their form that is completely different: they are much larger and are carved from a complete section of a sperm whale tooth. The writer may be mixing the usual material of construction of ear ornaments with that of toggles (*ivi po'o*) which, in turn, are almost always made from human bone.

In a production aimed at the general public, the specificity of native name, exact material of construction, or details of Pacific voyage history are not essential. This reviewer is not arguing that they should be included. As the writer has chosen to include them, however, an effort should have been made to confirm their accuracy. If the creators of the text and the editor of the CD did not wish to expend their time consulting the works in the bibliography to sufficiently check their work, the advisors

and consultants listed in the CD might have done so.

The visual component of this CD is not redemptive. The photographs do not provide a coherent or meaningful impression of most of the cultures or their art. Easter Island is represented by three contemporary snapshots: one of *moai*, one of petroglyphs (virtually illegible), and one of teenagers painting each other's faces.

As previous extracts indicate, there are frequent disconnects between the visual images (ranging from 18<sup>th</sup> century engravings to contemporary snapshots) and their accompanying texts. These temporal discontinuities are not effectively addressed by the text that resorts to expressions such as *in the old days*, and *in traditional times*. The dichotomy *then* and *now* is far too simplistic for the subject matter.

Many of the images on the CD consist of tourist snapshots and unevenly exposed and framed close-ups of objects. In many cases subjects are truncated or unevenly lit thus rendering portions invisible, such as the Fiji barkcloth and the Hawaiian feather cloak, respectively. Other objects are placed on distracting backgrounds, giving the images an old fashioned 1950s ambience and not in keeping with the overall style of the production. The Fijian wooden pieces are photographed this way.

Other objects reproduced throughout the CD are of questionable authenticity (the image of a Rarotongan staff god from Sotheby's London June 24th, 1992 sale for instance) or tourist souvenirs, many of the latter credited to author Yacoe's own collection. Some attempt is made to put positive spin on this use of what is literally airport art (in the case of the reproduction Fijian clubs and bowls from the Fortress collection): "*These contemporary examples show that fine carving and imaginative design continues (in Fiji)*". The idea that some design sense is required to crank out these rote facsimiles is incomprehensible to this reviewer.

Throughout, no dimensions are given. This is especially problematic when images of toys and models are reproduced in place of genuine objects like canoes, for example. Another omission is the lack of museum accession or catalogue numbers in those comparatively rare instances when museum objects are illustrated. A viewer wishing to learn more about a particular object would be unable to do so, except in the unlikely eventuality of an institution's only having one of a generic type object in its collection.

The shortcomings outlined above are troubling inasmuch as the CD owes its funding to a specific grant from the United States Department of Education (contract #RJ96006601). Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL) received nearly four million dollars of unrestricted funds (\$3,754,628) for their Regional Educational Laboratory that funded this and other projects, according to their annual report.

PREL states in the CD liner: "our business is education" and "PREL's mission is to strengthen culture, [and] improve literacy...." If the CD *Art of the Pacific Islands* is a fair example of what the USD of E is getting for its/our tax dollars, and of PREL's success in achieving its own stated goals, it is a very disheartening return.

*Norman Hurst is a member of the International Society of Appraisers (ISA) with certifications in Oceanic, African and*

American Indian art, the Appraisers Association of America, and the Antique Tribal Art Dealers Association (ATADA). He owns and operates Hurst Gallery in Cambridge Massachusetts.

### **Art of the Pacific Islands CD**

*A Technical review by Katherine Burton Jones*

In the worlds of Information Technology and Education much has happened since 1995. Technologies such as digital imaging, electronic mail, and digital video production that were emerging in the mid to late 1990s have matured and are becoming part of everyday life. The World Wide Web has radically changed our access to information and the audiences of content providers (corporations, educators, museums, etc.) have expanded. We have seen early generations of CD developers whose production costs were astronomical go out of business because there were no viable means of distribution. Now production costs are down and the technologies are widely available.

Educators are using these technologies to place content in the hands of teachers and the general public. The web has some advantages over CD and DVD in terms of the creation of dynamic information sites. CD ROM and DVD, while static, allow the users to "take the information home". Each of these may contain more content than the average web site.

As someone who has been both a content provider and a content developer, I had certain expectations of the technical components of *Art of the Pacific Islands*. Some of these were met but many were not. The section following provides comments on these components.

We viewed this with Windows 95 using a Pentium III computer and due to memory requirements were not able to view some of the video (specifically the *Looking at Art*, Dr Lori Phillips intro movie). The minimum requirements listed for this CD are: "PCs require Windows 95 and 486 processor (or higher) for optimum performance".

All menu screens provide clear options for navigating the CD except a back button is missing on many screens. The search feature is flawed in that if your search finds no records, there is no BACK or other mechanism button to take you to a new search. When an object has several images, the images are not synchronized to the scrolling text. The designers could have used audio as background for educational text especially when showing objects related to ceremonies. Audio is used as a general background medium in other cases. Photo credits and the terms in the glossary could have been done using a hyperlink to the full text or to roll over to show the credit or definition. As they are, it is difficult to navigate from the section you may be viewing to the section with the credits. Rollovers could have been used effectively throughout the CD but were not.

Given the capabilities of the web now, searching, navigating as well as presenting video, audio, and images have surpassed the capabilities used on this CD. These technologies were available at the time the CD was produced. Their incorporation would have made this presentation of material more effective and the use of the CD easier.

*Katherine Burton Jones is the Director of Information Technology and Media Services at the Harvard Divinity School. Ms.*

Jones was formerly an Assistant Director of the Harvard Peabody Museum and was Program Director of the Museum Computer Network.

**MICHIGANITES TAKE NOTE:** The Halsted Gallery, 560 N. Old Woodward Avenue, Birmingham, Michigan, is hosting an exhibit of the most recent Easter Island photographs by Michael Kenna. Along with the gallery opening, there will also be a book signing event for Kenna's new black/white photo book titled *Easter Island* (Nazraeli Press, Portland, Oregon, 2001). The book, cloth bound with tipped-in plate on cover and in a cloth slipcase has an introduction by Bill Jay. The book has 72 pages, with 40 duotone plates printed on matt art paper; size 12 x 12 inches. This first edition is limited to 1000 numbered copies. Michael Kenna has photographed Easter Island over a period of two years, creating a powerful new body of work which pays homage to the beauty of the island and the continuing mystery of its past. The phone number for the Halsted Gallery is 248-644-8284.

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